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DE RUEHNE #0346/01 0551054  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 241054Z FEB 09  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5489  
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1560  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4347  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3563  
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0299  
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7650  
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 000346

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR INR/MR

STATE FOR SCA/INS, PM/CBM, PM/PRO

STATE FOR SCA/PPD, PA/RRU

STATE FOR AID/APRE-A

USDOC FOR 4530/IEP/ANESA/OSA FOR BILL MURPHY

E.O. 12958:N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PAKISTAN, INDO - PAK RELATIONS,  
SRI LANKA, GLOBAL ECONOMY; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

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PAKISTAN  
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¶1. "TALIBAN IN PAKISTAN," editorial in the February 23 AMAR UJALA Hindi daily: "It is pretty evident from the ceasefire in Swat Valley that the Taliban is regaining strength in Pakistan. President Asif Ali Zardari's comments also underline Islamabad's helplessness in the face of the Taliban. The U.S. National Security Agency has intercepted messages indicating connections between the ISI and the Taliban. The U.S.' continuous attacks in specific areas of Pakistan cannot be without solid reasons. But what is Islamabad's intention? If it keeps supporting the Taliban then the U.S. air strikes are useless. On the other hand, Gilani has a strong hold over the army and the ISI and he agrees to their connections with the Taliban. Thus, despite being fewer in number and in opposition to the liberals, the Taliban has expanded in Pakistan. Pakistan is without a doubt collapsing from these monsters. Along with terrorism, the challenge of fanaticism deepening its roots in the neighborhood is equally worrisome for India."

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INDO - PAK RELATIONS

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¶2. "IT IS A POSITIVE APPROACH", editorial in the February 21 right-of-center Urdu daily RASHTRIYA SAHARA, New Delhi: "No one can deny the fact that, whether it is about cooperation in combating terrorism or efforts towards resolving the existing issues between the two countries, mutual dialogue is the only effective way out. If India and Pakistan go for war, the results could be tragic, in fact disastrous, and might even lead to complete annihilation. There cannot be any other outcome. The Pakistani leadership has also begun to fathom the situation now. It would be better if it focuses its energies on the development and prosperity of the country rather than creating war hysteria. It is extremely important that peace exist between the two countries, and for the welfare of the people that the two neighbors seek all possible cooperation in tackling the menace of terrorism while working together. The confidence building measures which had been promoted between India and Pakistan need to be carried forward in earnest, so that mutual trust is restored."

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SRI LANKA  
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¶3. "SRI LANKA & DEFENCE PROWESS OF LTTE", editorial in the February 21 right-of-center Urdu daily SIASAT, Hyderabad: "The recent aerial attack & bombardment on

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Colombo has proved that the LTTE has not lost much of its prowess and still retains a substantial amount of fury. It also retains the capability to take on the Sri Lankan army. Ironically, these so-called peace loving countries of the West invited the LTTE as spokesman and representative of the Tamil people to the peace conference in 2002. The LTTE accepted a good deal during dialogue, because it was keen to reinforce itself, gain ground and position itself for further offensives. The group has its own policies, system of governance, justice delivery mechanism and a well-defined objective. It is now strengthening itself to be safe from the onslaught launched by the Sri Lankan security forces. However, it no longer enjoys public support and a popular mandate, which it used to enjoy in 1983. The Lankan government is visibly confirmed."

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GLOBAL ECONOMY  
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¶4. "RECESSION AND EMPLOYMENT," editorial in the February 23 DAINIK HINDUSTAN Hindi daily: "Globalization warrants that movement of labor should be free. But developed nations, for obvious reasons, do not want this. The U.S., out of need and in its own interest, has small windows like the H-1B, but that's about it. In its own interest, America began off-shoring business processes in a big way, and that benefited many developing nations, including India. Now that recession has hit the U.S., the first sacrificial lamb on the chopping block is outsourcing. The West will make a big mistake if it ends outsourcing, because outsourcing helps America remain competitive. There are other ways to fight the economic slump besides ending outsourcing."

WHITE